

Michigan Amber Alert Success Stories

In July 2001, a seven-year-old boy was abducted in Jackson. Local law enforcement felt he was possibly headed to Canada. Having a full description of the vehicle, alleged abductor and child, an Amber Alert was activated at 7:00 p.m. The abductor heard a local radio station describe him and his car in detail in an Amber Alert. Fearful of what may happen, the abductor returned the child.

On an extremely cold winter evening in 2002, a 2-year-old child was abducted in Battle Creek. The woman was a known cocaine addict and local police felt the child was in imminent danger. Battle Creek police department activated an Amber Alert and in less than two hours the child was returned safely to his mother. The fax from the Battle Creek Police Department summed it all up on the Recovery Notice: Child was returned unharmed because of the Amber Alert!

While on a visit to a Madison Heights store, a 3-year-old and her grandmother were approached by a helpful 50-year-old man offering to change their flat tire. After completing the tire change, the man drove off in the car with the child. An Amber Alert was issued almost immediately. Television and radio stations broadcast bulletins about the abduction of the blond-haired, blue-eyed girl. The child was returned safely within 24 hours, thanks to the help of local stations, law enforcement and tips from the community.

Amber Alert works in Michigan!

What others have to say about Amber Alert...

"There is no more horrifying thought than the one that your kids are lost. Amber Alert allows us to share the burden of the incredible thought that harm has befallen someone's child. More important, it turns our collective fear into collective will, so that in those precious first minutes and hours when a child appears to be abducted, we rally with the greatest strength and will to see that this is not so."

-Daniel Granholm Mulhern
Office of the First Gentleman, State of Michigan

"Michigan's Amber Alert program is an important tool in the search and recovery of abducted and endangered missing children. By enlisting the help of broadcasters and citizens, law enforcement gains thousands of eyes and ears, which often results in a lost child being returned home safely."

-Colonel Tadarial J. Sturdivant
Director, Michigan State Police

"Laying competition aside, local radio and television stations across Michigan have eagerly joined together to better serve our communities by airing and promoting the Amber Alert program."

- Eduardo Fernandez
Chairman, Michigan Association of Broadcasters
Vice President/General Manager, FOX 17 WXMI-TV

Michigan's Amber Alert program is a cooperative effort by Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB), Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, Michigan State Police, and Michigan Sheriff's Association.

For more information contact:

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What is Amber Alert?

In the aftermath of the January 17, 1996 kidnapping and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Arlington, Texas, an emergency plan was devised to quickly recover abducted children. The Michigan Amber Alert program was inspired by and dedicated to the memory of Amber Hagerman.

On June 19, 2001 Michigan launched its Amber Alert program. Amber Alert was developed through the cooperation of the members of the Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB), the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the Michigan Sheriff's Association, and the Michigan State Police.

Michigan radio and television stations put all competition aside and join together to serve their communities by alerting citizens of an abduction in their area.

There are obvious benefits to radio and television transmission of the Michigan Amber Alert program. Ninety-five percent of all people driving in their automobiles are listening to the radio and 40 percent of missing kids whose pictures are shown on television are safely recovered. Activation of the Amber Alert means that thousands of eyes are immediately looking for the abducted child.



You are the eyes & ears...

Michigan's Amber Alert program relies on the public to help locate abducted children. You are an extension of the eyes and ears of law enforcement, reporting what you see and hear can play an important role in the success of the program.

If you hear or see an Amber Alert on your radio or television, be on the lookout for the child and the suspect described in the message that accompanies the alert. The alert will include a telephone number for you to report any information which may assist local law enforcement in recovery efforts.

If you witness a child abduction, contact your local law enforcement agency immediately.



Amber Alert is designed to quickly disseminate information related to a child abduction since statistics show that 74 percent of abducted children who are murdered are dead within three hours of the abduction.

How does Amber Alert work?

Before an Amber Alert can be issued, law enforcement must strongly believe that the child is a victim of abduction, or is missing, and at imminent risk of great bodily harm or death using the following four-point criteria:

- 1 The child must be under 17 years of age.
- 2 The child is a victim of kidnapping by a stranger or acquaintance.
- 3 The child is missing and with someone with a confirmed criminal history of severely harming children.
- 4 The child must have a mental or physical disability where they cannot properly care for themselves.

When a child is missing and is considered at risk according to the above information, the investigating agency contacts the Michigan State Police.

Michigan State Police forward the information to the appropriate radio and television stations in the region.

Radio and television stations broadcast the information to the public.

Changeable Message Signs are utilized in Detroit and Grand Rapids to notify drivers that an Amber Alert has been activated.

The public becomes the eyes and ears of the law enforcement, calling the local police or 911 with any information.



10 Parent Safety Tips

The Michigan State Police suggest the following safety tips to help parents keep their children safe:

- 1 Parents should take an active role in their children's lives.
- 2 Parents should know where their children are at all times and be familiar with their children's friends and daily activities.
- 3 Parents should teach their children to ask for permission from them first before going anywhere or with anyone.
- 4 Parents should teach their children to use the "buddy system" and to never travel alone.
- 5 Parents should teach their children that if something makes them feel uneasy or uncomfortable, they should get away quickly and tell their parents or a trusted adult about what happened.
- 6 Parents should teach their children that it is "ok" to be suspicious of an adult asking for assistance. Many child predators use this technique to isolate and distract a possible child victim.
- 7 Parents should assure their children they have the right to say "no" when they sense something is wrong.
- 8 Children should know their home address and telephone number, and know how to contact their parents if there is an emergency.
- 9 Parents should devise a secret code word that a child can learn in case there is an emergency, and a trusted adult needs to contact the child.
- 10 Parents should teach their children how to dial "911" when asking for help in an emergency and teach their children that when they are talking on the telephone to the "911" operator, they should: tell the person their name, speak loudly, speak slowly, speak clearly, and do not hang-up.

